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Dr. Ramsey Named Archbishop of Canterbury

(London) - Dr. Arthur Michael Ramsey, 56-year-old Archbishop of York, has been nominated by Queen Elizabeth II to succeed Dr. Geoffrey Francis Fisher as Archbishop of Canterbury when he retires May 31. (See EPS - No. 3, 1961)

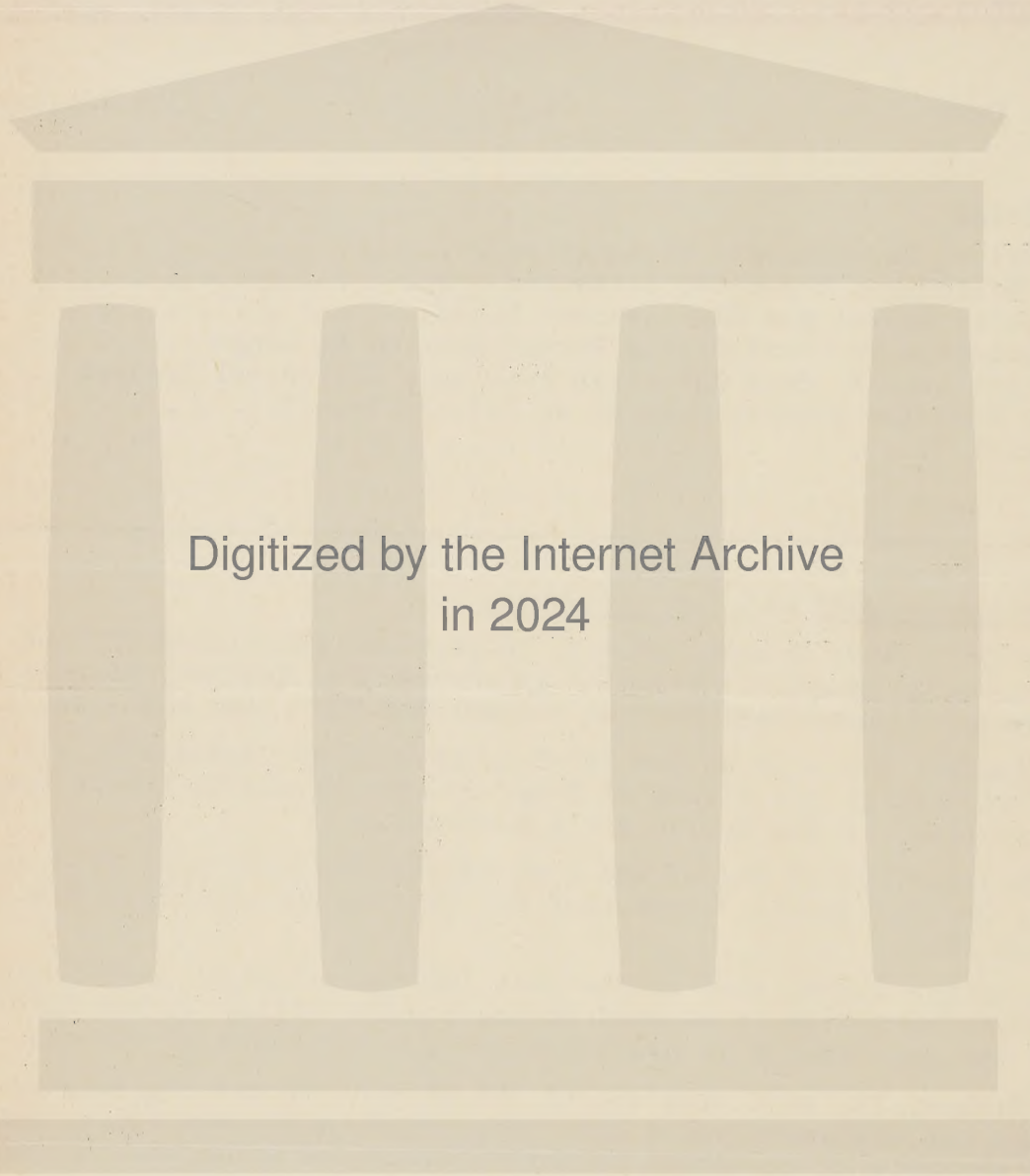
Dr. Ramsey, who will be the 100th Archbishop of Canterbury, will be succeeded at York by the Bishop of Bradford, Dr. Frederick Donald Coggan, 51, and president of the United Bible Societies.

Often described as one of the most brilliant present-day British clergymen, Dr. Ramsey was recommended for his new post by Prime Minister Harold Macmillan.

This is the fourth time in the last 160 years that an Archbishop of York has been nominated to succeed to the highest office in the Church of England. The appointment is usually made from the ranks of bishops.

Dr. Fisher, 73, said that one of the reasons he was retiring in May was so that his successor would have ample time in his new office before the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches which will be held in New Delhi, India, November 18 - December 6.

Like his predecessor, Dr. Ramsey has taken great interest in the ecumenical movement and attended both the first and second assemblies of the World Council of Churches. He is the author of a number of books on theology among which the most influential is "The Gospel and the Catholic Church".



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Dr. Ramsey indicated that he will not be enthroned as Primate of All England before July 1 at the earliest because of engagements in the Diocese of York and the fulfillment of certain formalities connected with his nomination.

Among the latter is his formal election by the 24-member Greater Council of Canterbury. However, in accordance with the traditional relationships between church and state in England, his nomination by the Queen is tantamount to his formal appointment.

EPS, Geneva.

Comment on Dr. Fisher's Resignation

(London) - Announcement of the forthcoming retirement of Dr. Geoffrey Francis Fisher as Archbishop of Canterbury has evoked tributes from home and abroad.

William Cardinal Godfrey, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, praised the Anglican primate for "his devoted services to our nation, his patriotism, and his sincere desire and endeavour to promote and foster the union of Christendom".

"This desire," he said, "is shared by many not of his faith and not least by Catholics everywhere. The recent visit of His Grace to Pope John XXIII was a gesture we all greatly appreciate. We hope and pray with the Archbishop that it may bear fruit, that any misunderstandings may be removed and that no element of bitterness may disturb the concord among those who seek to follow Christ."

The London Times commended Dr. Fisher for seeking to heal the breaches in Christendom "by means which are more effective for being undramatic".

In its leading article, "Architect of Unity", The London Daily Telegraph noted that Dr. Fisher's primacy has been "one of the most difficult in the history of the Church", being marked by "certitudes and beliefs melting under the impact of wars, sciences, materialism, immorality and new ideologies".

His successor, Dr. Arthur Michael Ramsey, currently the Archbishop of York, said in his presidential address to the Convocation of York that the news of Dr. Fisher's retirement already has "set us recalling with thankfulness for what Archbishop Fisher has been to us and the Church".

The news also brought comment from the Egyptian Government newspaper, Al Jumhuriyah of Cairo, which termed the retirement a blow to the Arab peoples. The paper praised him as "one of the greatest religious and civic personalities" and noted that "the English Church has lost a great leader and the Arabs a very good friend".

EPS, Geneva.

Full Fellowship Urged for Lutherans

(Geneva) - A prominent Lutheran theologian has scored as "an ecclesiological anomaly" the fact that the Lutheran World Federation is merely "a free association" of churches which although adhering to the same doctrinal basis do not accord pulpit and altar fellowship to each other.

Prof. Peter Brunner, of the University of Heidelberg, writing in the current LWF quarterly Lutheran World, published in Geneva, says the ultimate destiny of the Federation is to unite Lutheran churches everywhere in an ecclesiastical fellowship and to become "an organ of the one globe-circling Lutheran Church".

Because of its "binding doctrinal basis," he wrote, the LWF is "constantly having to act as a Church and make decisions which lie within the scope of ecclesiastical doctrinal decisions.

"Developments in the Federation itself show that there are internal reasons why it must grow beyond itself. The essential tasks which the world federation has set for itself by their very nature demand the action of a Church."

However, the writer stressed that he did not contemplate a "Vatican Church", nor was he advocating that LWF member churches "must merge into one single entity".

In one of several comments on the article published in the same issue, Prof. Regin Prenter of the University of Aarhus, Denmark, agreed that "it becomes intolerable when Lutheran churches of the same confessional stand do not have full fellowship". But, he argued, if church fellowship requires manifestation in a central organization, a new and separate organ should be developed for that purpose while the LWF should be continued as "a free association of autonomous churches".

Prof. Ernest Kinder of the University of Münster, Germany, acknowledged the goal of fellowship between all Lutheran churches, but advised against speaking of a "globe-encircling church" and the LWF as its official organ because "such terms could easily conjure up misleading conceptions of some kind of organizational super-church".

EPS, Geneva.

US Public School Aid Plan Arouses Debate

(New York) - Francis Cardinal Spellman, Roman Catholic Archbishop of New York, has condemned a proposal by President Kennedy's task force on education as being "unfair" to the nation's parochial and private school children. The prelate's comments drew immediate criticism from Protestant leaders.

The task force recommended that Congress enact a US\$5,840,000,000 programme of Federal aid to public schools. However, Cardinal Spellman noted that no Roman Catholic schools or institutions of other denominations were included in the proposal.

In a statement read at the final report meeting of his campaign for a US\$25,000,000 fund for the construction of educational facilities in the Archdiocese of New York, the Cardinal charged that the recommendation represented a form of unequal taxation. He said that many millions of American parents could not expect any return from their taxes unless they were willing to transfer their children to public schools.

"It is unthinkable," said the Cardinal, "that any American child be denied the Federal funds allotted to other children which are necessary for his mental development because his parents choose for him a God-centered education."

He said further that he could not "believe that Congress would discriminate against, Lutheran, Baptist, Catholic or Jewish parents - Americans all - in the allocation of educational funds".

Dr. Oswald C.J. Hoffmann, public relations director for the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, advised the prelate "not to speak for us Lutherans," and commented that his denomination would not feel discriminated against if Federal funds were restricted to public schools.

Dr. W. Hubert Porter, associate general secretary of the American Baptist Convention, said it was "most unfortunate that a leading cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church would attack a position to which Mr. Kennedy pledged himself repeatedly before nation-wide audiences during his successful campaign for the Presidency not to use public funds for parochial schools".

The Missouri Synod operates the largest education system of any US Protestant Church with 1,293 schools. A few elementary schools are also operated by the Baptists.

Meanwhile, E. Allison Grant, past president of the Protestant Episcopal School Association, affirmed "the doctrine of church-state separation". However, he said he personally favoured "some federal aid," and conceded that "the argument of Catholics against 'double taxation' is a cogent one".
EPS, Geneva.

US Baptists Will Study Closer Cooperation

(Chicago) - Leaders of three US Baptist churches - one predominantly white and the other two Negro - have approved plans for a joint committee to investigate ways in which they can cooperate more closely.

The committee has been authorized by the Southern Baptist Convention, largest US Baptist church with 9,500,000 members and two Negro churches, the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., with 5,000,000 members, and the National Baptist Convention of America, with nearly 3,000,000 adherents.

Committee recommendations, expected next summer, must be approved by each of the three churches. The Southern Baptists and two Negro Conventions already have cooperative work in 17 states including missions, education, evangelism and stewardship.
EPS, Geneva.

Seminary Recruitment Cooperation Urged

(Montreal) - Members of the interdenominational divinity faculty at McGill University have called for immediate and close cooperation among Anglican, Presbyterian and United Church leaders in recruiting and training men for the ministry.

Timed to coincide with the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, letters were addressed to heads of the three Canadian church bodies with the unanimous consent of the McGill faculty.

The letters recommended "establishment of a mutually acceptable ministry in new suburbs and towns and the more sparsely populated areas of our country". They also called for "the transcendence of the barriers to the full inter-communion of our denominations".

Canada's population increase, the letters said, have made it urgent for the churches to exercise a spirit of imaginative and Christian adventurousness, however fitting an attitude of caution and delay may have been in the past.
EPS, Geneva.

Missionaries To Start Flying Doctor Service In Congo

(Geneva) - An airplane of the Missionary Aviation Fellowship is now in the Kasai district of the Congo and will be in service by the end of January,

Dr. William Rule, executive secretary, Congo Protestant Relief Agency, has reported in a letter from Leopoldville to World Council of Churches headquarters in Geneva.

But Dr. Rule said more medical help is required. He desperately needs three more doctors to help in setting up his airborne medical teams in a huge area that is entirely without doctors.

He foresees that the supplies he will need most during the coming months are anti-malarial drugs. He made a special appeal for Mepacrine and Quinacrine tablets and injections, Paludrine, Chloroquine phosphate, Camoquine hydrochloride, and Daraprim which he could use, he says, in "almost any quantities". He adds that he could also use to advantage and would greatly welcome antibiotics and all sulpha drugs. (See Special Report, EPS No. 3, 1961)

EPS, Geneva.

Australian Churches Plan Ecumenical Institute

(Sydney) - The National Conference of Australian Churches will establish an Ecumenical Institute to help bridge "the deep gulf which separates institutional church life from the daily life of men and women" and "restore the two-way traffic of real communication between the Church and the world".

An announcement said the Institute will conduct theological and sociological research, provide a meeting ground for persons of differing church and vocational backgrounds and prepare laymen and ministers to train other Christians for more effective participation in community life.

EPS, Geneva.

Quakers Map New Youth Service Programme

(Philadelphia) - The American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker organization, will launch a new programme for young people to acquire on-the-job training in service work abroad and in the USA.

The programme will seek to attract recent college graduates or persons with equivalent background who will help pay part of their own expenses and be supervised by AFSC personnel at their posts. In the past the organisation has recruited older persons and paid their expenses.

About 50 young men and women have been selected thus far. Twelve of this group will spend next summer in Tanganyika on agricultural production programmes and ten will go to India to teach and do social service work. Other volunteers will be sent to Latin America, Europe, and parts of the U.S.A.

EPS, Geneva.

Churches Aid Victims of Hong Kong Refugee Fire

(Hong Kong) - Lutheran relief officials have distributed large quantities of clothing, blankets and cooking utensils to survivors of the fire which swept the Hunghom district of Kowloon last week killing four persons, injuring eleven and leaving nearly 11,000 homeless.

The fire was the worst in the Hong Kong area since the Christmas Day disaster of 1953 when 60,000 lost their homes. It covered eight acres and leveled more than 1,000 huts to smouldering litter.

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church was turned into an emergency feeding station for hundreds of victims and Roman Catholic agencies also dispensed rice, noodles, and milk. CARE distributed blankets, dishes, chopsticks and other articles as well as food parcels of rice, bean curd, cabbage and salted fish. Church aid was provided in cooperation with the government's Social Welfare Department and other government agencies which are erecting temporary shelters for the victims.

EPS, Geneva.

Anglican and Reformed Theologians Meet

(London) - Seven theologians of the Netherlands Reformed Church met recently with a group of Anglican scholars at Lambeth Palace for informal discussions designed to enable them to learn more about each others thinking and study. The theme of their discussions was "The People of God".

The visit, on invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, was made in repayment of a visit by a group of Anglicans to the Netherlands Church in 1958, the first official contact between the two churches in nearly 350 years.

Observers were present from the Presbyterian Church of England, the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands and the Dutch (Reformed) Church in London.

EPS, Geneva.

Catholic Scholar Sees Christian Reunion a Historical Process

(Arnoldshain) - A Roman Catholic scholar has commented that Christian unity will be a new and gradual historical process, and not simply a restoration of the unity which the Church lost centuries ago.

This view was presented at a study conference conducted by the Ecumenical Centrale at the Evangelical Academy here by Professor J.G.M. Willebrands of Rome, a professor of comparative studies of denominations and secretary of the Vatican's Secretariat for Christian Unity directed by Augustin Cardinal Bea.

Speaking on the significance of the Second Vatican (Ecumenical) Council, Professor Willebrands refused to accept the belief that the Catholic Church is preventing Christian unity because of its claim as the one authentic Church which Christ established.

Professor Willebrands contended that people must not insist that Catholics abandon their belief in the primacy of the Pope and the Church. And he noted that The Toronto Statement of the World Council of Churches (1950) declares that the ecumenical movement will not be furthered by an insistence on the abandonment of principles or beliefs.

It was a concern for Christian unity that led Pope John XXIII to call the Second Vatican (Ecumenical) Council, he said. But he added that it was neither conceivable nor desirable at present for the Catholic Church to become an official member of the World Council of Churches, since there must first be a long period of unofficial relationships.

Through the establishment of the new Secretariat for Christian Unity, he explained, the Roman Church has created the "eyes" and "ears" for observing and listening to other Christians. This secretariat, he added, is also the mouthpiece through which the Catholic Church "may possibly speak to them".

At the same conference, Professor Edmund Schlink, professor of Protestant theology at the University of Heidelberg, stated that the "original spiritual impulse" which led the Pope to convene the Council had, to a large extent, met with a positive response on the part of non-Roman Christians.

He expressed the belief that it was very pertinent that the pontiff did not issue an invitation to a "union council" with non-Roman communions of the world because of the undeveloped feeling for ecumenism within the Catholic Church, especially in the Latin countries.

Professor Schlink expressed the belief that the dangers facing Christian unity in the future were the trend towards centralism within the Roman Church, and the temptation on the part of the World Council to be content with mere cooperation between separate churches.

While decentralisation is needed in the Roman Church, he insisted, the WCC must develop a firmer theological basis. EPS, Geneva.

Roman Catholic Leaders Comment on Vatican Council

(Geneva) - Roman Catholic leaders in three other parts of the world also commented last week on the forthcoming Second Vatican (Ecumenical) Council.

The Rev. Robert A. Graham, SJ., associate editor of the national Catholic weekly America, a Jesuit publication, addressing a Catholic student group in Providence R.I., (USA) suggested that clarification by the Council of the authority of bishops in relation to the supremacy of the Pope may be a step forward in achieving Christian unity.

He observed that "the whole mentality" of the Catholic Church has changed towards Protestants during the past generation and urged the students "to look upon your non-Catholic brethren with a little less jaundiced view than was prevalent in my time".

A similar note was struck by the Rev. Gregory Baum of St. Basil's Seminary, Toronto, Canada, and a consultant to the Secretariat for Christian Unity, one of the groups preparing for the Council.

Fr. Baum said that the Roman Catholic Church has now started taking Protestant criticism seriously instead of dismissing it as simply wrong. He said the church must be prepared to change in areas where its elements are adaptable to change, but warned that it would never consider changing permanent elements such as doctrine, sacraments and hierarchical structure.

The Roman Catholic hierarchy of the Netherlands issued a pastoral letter in which they called upon the faithful to pray for the success of the Council and to "reflect on their own faith and present situation in which they live".

"We Catholics have the task to render the Church a true living sphere in which our separate brethren can find the fulfillment of all that they glean from their own spirituality as a dearly-beloved Christian legacy," they said. "Their spirituality can, in turn, stimulate our own".

A new 30-page pamphlet on the Council published by the church warned readers not to expect miracles of the Council, but defended the right of the faithful to criticize. "We do not deny you this privilege", it said. "The Church shall not fight shy of factual, historical truth, even though it be unpleasant. But let your criticism be competent."

EPS, Geneva.

Religious Instruction Abolished in Polish Schools

(Warsaw) - A resolution abolishing religious instruction in state schools has been adopted by the Central Committee of the Polish Labour Party.

Contending that religion is a private matter for every citizen, the resolution noted that authorities have no objection if parents want their children to study religion. But, it added, "in the interest of all parents, believers and non-believers, this religious instruction should be given out of school".

By the beginning of the last school term, religious instruction had already been dropped in many state schools. EPS, Geneva.

Soviet Press Cautioned Against Insults To "Poisonous" Religion

(Moscow) - The Soviet press has been urged to use more tact in spreading anti-religious propaganda and to avoid using such phrases as "gangster meetings" and "wasps nests" in reference to religious gatherings.

Pravda, organ of the Communist Party's Central Committee, also condemned as "one-sided atheistic propaganda" reports of alleged immorality on the part of some clergy "which have filled some Soviet publications lately".

In an unsigned, four-column editorial, Pravda recalled the advice recently given by Premier Khrushchev: "Being atheists does not give us a right to insult the religious feelings of churchgoers".

"Unfortunately", said Russia's leading Communist newspaper, "not all Soviet publications remember this advice".

While it stressed that "only educative methods are permissible, along with careful supervision to ensure that the clergy obeys Soviet laws", Pravda cited newspapers which, it said, are properly promoting the party's "final aim - the liberation of all citizens from the poisonous influence of religion". EPS, Geneva.

Churches Aid Cuban Refugees

(Miami) - US churches - faced for the first time in decades with a situation in which the nation is the country of first asylum for a large number of refugees - have set up a programme to help them find homes and jobs.

The refugees are the estimated 50,000 persons who have fled the Castro regime in Cuba across the 90-mile "water curtain" to Florida.

Church World Service has established an office to register and interview Cuban applicants for resettlement in other parts of the nation, in cooperation with local church authorities. Some 30,000 of the group are reported still living in the Miami area of southern Florida, although jobs for the new-comers are reported "virtually non-existent" because of general economic conditions in the city. 20,000 residents of the area are reported unemployed.

The U.S. Government has allocated \$1,000,000 to provide assistance and various other welfare agencies are also working to help them.

EPS, Geneva.

In Brief

An appeal for "foster parents" to "adopt" youngsters in the famine-stricken, disease-ridden Congo has been made by the Swiss Protestant relief agency, "Hilfswerk." The "foster parents" will agree to contribute 10 Swiss francs (US \$2.50) a month for at least six months in an effort to cut the Congo's present child mortality rate.

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Evangelist Billy Graham has told reporters that he believes the election of Roman Catholic John F. Kennedy as US president has promoted better understanding between Roman Catholics and Protestants in the USA. Dr. Graham said Mr. Kennedy's victory proved that there is not as much religious prejudice in the US as many feared, and probably had reduced forever the importance of the religious issue in American elections.

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A 40 lb. rough-hewn block of stone from the 15-century old Iona Abbey in the Western Isles of Scotland has been shipped to Australia where it will be incorporated into the new St. Silas's Church to be built at North Balwyn, later this year. The stone, which has three St. Andrews' crosses carved along one edge, was sent as a good will gift to the new church from the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

* * *

A Baptist Church in Seville, Spain, closed by government authorities in November, 1958, has been re-opened, according to word received by the Baptist World Alliance in London. An Alliance spokesman described the re-opening as "a very significant act and most encouraging for the whole of Baptist work in Spain".

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Protopresbyter Nicolai Kolschitsky, dean of the Patriarchal Cathedral,, Moscow, has died in Moscow. Some western newspapers erroneously reported the death of Metropolitan Nicolai, former head of the Foreign Affairs Department of the Moscow Patriarchate.

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The British and Foreign Bible Society has reported an enthusiastic reception for its new translation of the Bible now being sold in schools and bookshops in the Congo in spite of conditions there. The text represents an attempt to unify the varied dialects spoken in Eastern Congo, and while the vocabulary is similar to Swahili, the translation is simpler grammatically.

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A new Assemblies of God church, located just three miles from the launching site of satellites, has been opened at Camp Canaveral, Fla., for families of working on US Government space projects. The building was erected by the members who had been holding services in the recreation building of a local trailer park. Sixty-five adults are enrolled in the church and 141 children in the Sunday school.

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